Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Amended) A method for a bulletin board feature in a supply chain management framework, comprising:

       a)   an independent supply chain computer collecting data of completed sales and information relating to distributors from a plurality of independent stores of a franchise supply chain utilizing a network;

       b)   displaying a network-based interface for allowing access to the data and creating an electronic bulletin board on the network based interface that can display the information;

       c)   mediating the information relating to the distributors and permitting only some of the information to be displayed on the electronic bulletin board using franchise rules of mediation;

       d)   a supply chain management computer determining a level of reliance of the store on various distributors;

       e)   receiving a selection of one of the distributors made based at least in part on the viewing of the information on the electronic bulletin board and at least in part based on the reliance of the store on the distributor; displaying a network-based interface for allowing access to the data; and

       e)f)   generating an electronic order form based on the data utilizing the network-based interface for ordering goods from the one of the selected distributors of the supply chain, wherein the network-based interface includes a bulletin board displaying information received from each of the stores, the information relating to the distributors for facilitating the selection of the distributors.

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the information relates to a timeliness of deliveries made by the distributors.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the information relates to a quality of the goods delivered by the distributors.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the information relates to a price of the goods delivered by the distributors.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a store from which the information is received is identified.

6.   (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the store from which the information is received is identified utilizing an electronic mail address for communication purposes.

7.   (Amended) A system for a bulletin board feature in a supply chain management framework, comprising:

an electronic storage; and

a set of processors that use the electronic storage and include among them the following logic elements

a)   logic for an independent supply chain computer collecting data of completed sales and information relating to distributors from a plurality of independent stores of a franchise supply chain utilizing a network;

b)   logic for displaying a network-based interface for allowing access to the data and creating an electronic bulletin board on the network based interface that can display the information;

c)   logic for mediating the information relating to the distributors and permitting only some of the information to be displayed on the electronic bulletin board using franchise rules of mediation;

d)   logic for a supply chain management computer determining a level of reliance of the store on various distributors;

e)   logic for receiving a selection of one of the distributors made based at least in part on the viewing of the information on the electronic bulletin board and at least in part based on the reliance of the store on the distributor; and

e)f)   logic for generating an electronic order form based on the data utilizing the network-based interface for ordering goods from the one of the ~~selected~~ distributors of the supply chain~~, wherein the network-based interface includes a bulletin board displaying information received from each of the stores, the information relating to the distributors for facilitating the selection of the distributors~~.

8.   (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein the information relates to a timeliness of deliveries made by the distributors.

9.   (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein the information relates to a quality of the goods delivered by the distributors.

10.   (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein the information relates to a price of the goods delivered by the distributors.

11.   (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein a store from which the information is received is identified.

12.   (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein the store from which the information is received is identified utilizing an electronic mail address for communication purposes.

13.   (Amended) A computer program product for a bulletin board feature in a supply chain management framework, comprising:

a set of computer usable media having computer readable program code embodied therein to be executed by a computer, the computer readable program code comprising

a)   computer code for <u>an independent supply chain computer</u> collecting data <u>of</u> <u>completed sales and information relating to distributors</u> from a plurality of <u>independent</u> stores of a <u>franchise</u> supply chain utilizing a network;

b)   computer code for displaying a network-based interface for allowing access to the data <u>and creating an electronic bulletin board on the network based interface that can</u> <u>display the information;</u>

<u>c)   mediating the information relating to the distributors and permitting only some</u> <u>of   the information to be displayed on the electronic bulletin board using franchise rules</u> <u>of mediation;</u>

<u>d)   computer code for a supply chain management computer determining a level</u> <u>of reliance of the store on various distributors;</u>

<u>e)   computer code for receiving a selection of one of the distributors made based</u> <u>at least in part on the viewing of the information on the electronic bulletin board and at least</u> <u>in part based on the reliance of the store on the distributor;</u> and

~~e)~~<u>f)</u>   computer code for generating an electronic order form based on the data utilizing the network-based interface for ordering goods from <u>the one of the</u> ~~selected~~ distributors of the supply chain~~, wherein the network-based interface includes a bulletin board~~ ~~displaying information received from each of the stores, the information relating to the~~ ~~distributors for facilitating the selection of the distributors~~.

14.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein the information relates to a timeliness of deliveries made by the distributors.

15.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein the information relates to a quality of the goods delivered by the distributors.

16.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein the information relates to a price of the goods delivered by the distributors.

17.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 13, wherein a store from which the information is received is identified.

18.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 17, wherein the store from which the information is received is identified utilizing an electronic mail address for communication purposes.

19.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the mediating step comprises mediating content of the information by the supply chain manager.

20.   (New) The system of claim 7, wherein the logic for mediating comprises mediating content of the information by taking input from the supply chain manager.

21.   (New) The program product of claim 13, wherein the program code for mediating mediates content of the information via input from the supply chain manager.